

### Appropriations Committee Testimony

February 23, 2017

Dear Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Benjamin Davies, I live in Bolton, and I am the Manager of Advocacy & Outreach at MARC Community Resources in Middletown. I am writing to comment on H.B. 7027 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNium ENDING JUNE THIRTEENTH 2019. I have been a professional in the human service industry for over 10 years. While I can honestly say I love my job and cherish the relationships I've made with other professionals, families, advocates and most importantly the individuals we serve, this industry is in a dire situation with regards to its budget. Sadly provider agencies, individuals receiving services and their families have seen nothing but cuts for the last decade.

And once again, Connecticut's non-profits are at the mercy of the state budget. Community nonprofits provides vital resources, programs and services to adults with a variety of intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) throughout Connecticut. Community providers gives people hope, purpose and the help they need. However, the unmet needs of those with I/DD remain high.

With Connecticut facing a \$1.5 billion budget shortfall this year, the Governor and legislators have limited choices to balance the budget. The Office of Policy and Management (OPM) has suggested that organizations could face as much as 10% budget cuts. Cuts of that magnitude would have a devastating effect on MARC in particular and would bring staff layoffs at nearly every agency and elimination of programs for thousands of individuals in a time when the demand for services across the state is on the rise.

It does not make sense to make across the board cuts to DDS and DSS when more than 90 percent of the people who are fortunate enough to receive services, receive their high quality supports from nonprofits in the community. Furthermore, research indicates that shifting services into the nonprofit sector can save the State \$1.24 billion over five years while maintaining the highest quality of care ([http://ctnonprofitalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/final-Conversion-Numbers\\_The-Alliance-01.17.17.pdf](http://ctnonprofitalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/final-Conversion-Numbers_The-Alliance-01.17.17.pdf)). Legislators should look to strategically cut the inefficiencies that exist in the public sector and explore additional partnerships with nonprofit providers that deliver services to state residents in a more cost effective manner, while maintaining the highest quality of those services. It has been repeatedly proven that nonprofit services can be delivered at a greatly reduced cost on a per person basis compared to the public sector.

We need to address increasing needs in the community. The programs and services MARC and other community nonprofits provide to the residents of Connecticut are a vital part of our cities and towns, allowing families, seniors and individuals with complex needs to live productive lives in the community, and contributing to making Connecticut a great place to live and raise a family. Cost-effective, high quality services provided in the community can be part of the solution to the state's budgeting problems, through the shifting of state-provided services to the nonprofit sector. I ask that you please restore funding for day and employment services for new graduates, family support grants and families who need behavioral support services. Also, please support the Governor's proposal to invest \$3.8 million in the ID Partnership which will help people on the DDS residential waiting list, support developing more residential options for people with I/DD and stabilize community based supports.

Thank you for your time and efforts.

Benjamin Davies  
Manager of Advocacy & Outreach @ MARC Community Resources  
Ben.davies@marc-cr.org  
860-342-0700 x216